



COUNCIL MINUTES

April 20, 2009

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on April 20, 2009 at 4:51 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Scott Somers

COUNCIL ABSENT

Dina Higgins
Dave Richins

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

Mayor Smith excused Councilmembers Higgins and Richins from the entire meeting.

1. Hear a presentation on clean air from County Supervisors Fulton Brock and Don Stapley, and Air Quality Director, Lawrence Odle.

Deputy Director for Environmental and Sustainability Programs Scott Bouchie introduced County Supervisor Don Stapley and Holly Ward, Public Information Officer for Maricopa County's Department of Air Quality. Mr. Bouchie advised that the City of Mesa has partnered with Maricopa County for many years regarding air quality issues and will continue to do so.

Supervisor Stapley thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to present information on the clean air issue, and he encouraged everyone to tour the clean air mobile unit that is on display in the parking lot.

Supervisor Stapley advised that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated Maricopa County as an area of serious non-attainment, which could result in the loss of seven billion dollars in Federal transportation funds if the Region fails to meet the required air quality standards. He emphasized that everyone in the Region must cooperate to resolve the problems, and he added that the commitment of the Board of Supervisors to clean air was demonstrated by passing more stringent regulations, funding the purchase of computerized monitoring systems, and hiring an Air Quality Director, Lawrence Odle, who has experience with air quality problems similar to those in Maricopa County.

Ms. Ward continued the presentation and advised that Mr. Odle, who has laryngitis, sent his regrets that he was unable to attend this meeting. She introduced County Department of Air Quality staff members who were present in the audience and who serve as liaisons with cities,

towns and industry. Ms. Ward displayed a PowerPoint presentation (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) to provide an overview of the history and current status of air quality in Maricopa County. Ms. Ward advised that although Maricopa County is allowed three exceedance days within a three-year period, there have been 53 exceedance days in the past 3.4 years. She reviewed the provisions of the "5% Plan" (see Attachment 1), which has the goal of reducing particulate pollution emissions by five percent each year until attainment is reached. Ms. Ward reported that a survey of participants attending a February workshop for cities and towns identified areas of need and interest (see Attachment 2).

Ms. Ward stated that the public outreach effort is titled, "Clean Air Make More," which is a focused, action-oriented campaign that includes billboards, radio announcements, brochures and flyers made available at local events, community presentations, declarations of "no burn days" on High Pollution Advisory (HPA) days, text alerts and eBlast communications. She noted that information is also available on the "Clean Air Make More" website.

Ms. Ward noted that everyone should be involved in the clean air effort, and she outlined areas where the City could provide leadership in the "Clean Air Make More" campaign (see Attachment 3).

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Jones, Supervisor Stapley stated that the County has paved many miles of roads within County islands, and he added that funds from the Federal Stimulus package should enable the County to pave additional areas.

Mr. Bouchie responded to a question from Vice Mayor Jones by advising that the City has 0.1 miles of unpaved roadways.

Mayor Smith said that dust at construction sites is responsible for a substantial amount of the particulate matter in the air and that the primary method of controlling dust is water. He asked if there should be a balance between utilizing valuable water resources and controlling the dust.

Ms. Ward stated that water is only one method of dust control, and she noted that other ground stabilization methods could be implemented, such as using gravel or rocks to stabilize the area or only grading a portion of the site as needed rather than grading an entire area.

Responding to a question from Mayor Smith, Supervisor Stapley said that the County strictly enforces many regulations related to dust control, such as "track out" violations which causes dirt from a construction site to be deposited on paved roadways where it is repeatedly disturbed by vehicles. He explained that the current effort is focused on education and communication rather than the imposition of large fines. He added that the amounts of the fines are primarily dictated by the EPA.

Mayor Smith expressed concern that the EPA standards are unreasonable for a desert area that has dust storms.

Supervisor Stapley advised that the EPA allows an exceedance for naturally occurring events, such as a wind or monsoon storm.

Ms. Ward noted that the natural desert has a stabilized crust and dust is created when human activity disturbs the crust. She stated that the County would like the City to appoint a Clean Air

Ambassador to direct the City's efforts, and she added that in addition to creating a cleaner environment, the Region does not want to lose the transportation funding.

Councilmember Somers noted the similarities of human activity in the Southwest and the activity that resulted in the 1930's "dust bowl" in Oklahoma and Texas.

Mayor Smith advised that the City would formalize its clean air advocacy and cooperate with the County in this effort. He thanked Supervisor Stapley and Ms. Ward for the presentation.

2. Review items on the agenda for the April 20, 2009 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest declared: None

Items added to the consent agenda: None

Items removed from the agenda: None

3. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on budget issues including, but not limited to:

a. Fire Department

Fire Chief Harry Beck addressed the Council and noted that many changes have occurred since October of 2008 with regard to services and the budget, including a budget reduction of \$3.7 million for the current fiscal year and \$3.8 million for the 2009/10 budget. He said that the budget is monitored on a monthly basis, and he outlined the impact of budget reductions on various programs and identified activities that have reinvented the model of the Fire Department (see Attachment 4). Chief Beck noted that the TRV (Transitional Response Vehicle) Program began more than two years ago as an innovative pilot program, which is likely to become the Fire Department's primary resource for life support services.

Chief Beck reviewed fire station construction projects and said that Fire Station 219 would be located at Elliot and Signal Butte Road, that Station 218 would be located at 8th Street and Alma School Road, and that Station 215 at the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport is being rebuilt. He noted that these facilities would require no additional fire fighters.

In response to a question from Councilmember Somers, Chief Beck advised that a TRV at Station 202 is handling many of the Basic Life Support (BLS) calls. He stated that the TRV's are performing exactly as envisioned by the Program, and he noted that the call volume is being monitored closely. Chief Beck added that the TRV's are utilizing "automatic vehicle location," which expands the service area.

Chief Beck stated that the department is in the process of assuming responsibility for the fire dispatch system, which includes BLS and ALS (advanced life support) calls. He said that the categories of calls will be expanded to include high emergency calls (structure fires and advanced life support medical) and low emergency (basic life support and checking for hazardous types of activities). Chief Beck said the other types of calls are for social services,

checking for hazards and service calls (such as keys locked in a vehicle). He stated that the public should be educated regarding the appropriate issues for a 911 call, and he added that dispatchers would be trained to understand the appropriate 911 response and other alternatives that might be available.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Somers, Chief Beck stated that the 311 system is available to the City for non-emergency calls. He said that as call volume data is collected and analyzed, use of the system could be considered.

In response to a question from Mayor Smith, Chief Beck advised that the Fire Department does not currently maintain data regarding the breakdown of emergency and non-emergency 911 calls that are received, but that this type of information would be collected in the future. He estimated that approximately 40 percent of all medical calls are for Basic Life Support services.

Mayor Smith said that many citizens are surprised to learn that the Fire Department has become the primary care physician for many individuals in the community, which is a situation that did not exist twenty or thirty years ago. He noted that the funding sources have not changed during this time period, which places an additional strain on City resources. Mayor Smith commended Chief Beck for investigating alternative ways of providing these services.

Chief Beck advised that the staffing for two TRVs at Stations 202 and 209 have no impact on overtime. He added that as a result of attrition, the physicians currently staffing the TRVs would be leaving within the next eighteen months, and that staff would then be reassigned in order to maintain service. He added that when Station 218 opens, there would be no staff available for the TRVs.

In response to comments by Vice Mayor Jones, Chief Beck explained that the process of recruiting, training, equipping, and placing a fire fighter in the field involves a time period of six to nine months. He advised that new recruits who have completed the academy cannot be placed in a position until the Fire Department has a vacancy. He explained that a training academy class may not be offered as existing staff could be redistributed or other options could be explored. Chief Beck said that staffing the TRVs with physician's assistants would enable them to bill for their services, which could result in some cost recovery. He reported that consideration is also being given to expanding the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) Program in areas of high activity and high occupancy. Chief Beck stated the opinion that the combination of these efforts would enable the Fire Department to continue to provide a high level of service at a lower cost per call.

Mayor Smith noted that the Regular Council meeting was scheduled to begin shortly, and he invited Chief Beck to complete his presentation at the Thursday, April 23rd, Study Session.

4. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Audit & Finance Committee meeting held March 26, 2009
- b. Design Review Board meeting held March 4, 2009
- c. Economic Development Advisory Board meeting held March 3, 2009
- d. Museum and Cultural Advisory Board meeting held February 11, 2009

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Vice Mayor Jones, that receipt of the above referenced minutes be acknowledged.

Mayor Smith declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

5. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

There were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

6. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady announced that despite the current economic conditions, the City's General Obligation Bond rating by Standard & Poor's remains unchanged from last year.

Mr. Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, April 21, 2009, 6:30 p.m. – District 5 "Building Strong Neighborhoods" Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – City Council Study Session

Saturday, April 25, 2009, 8:00 a.m. – Falcon Field Airport Open House

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 20th day of April, 2009. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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Attachments (4)